

The
WHITE PINE
SERIES OF
Architectural Monographs
Volume VII *Number 2*

Comparative Study of a Group of
EARLY AMERICAN
DOORWAYS

*Programme of Sixth Annual
Architectural Competition
on Pages Fifteen & Sixteen*

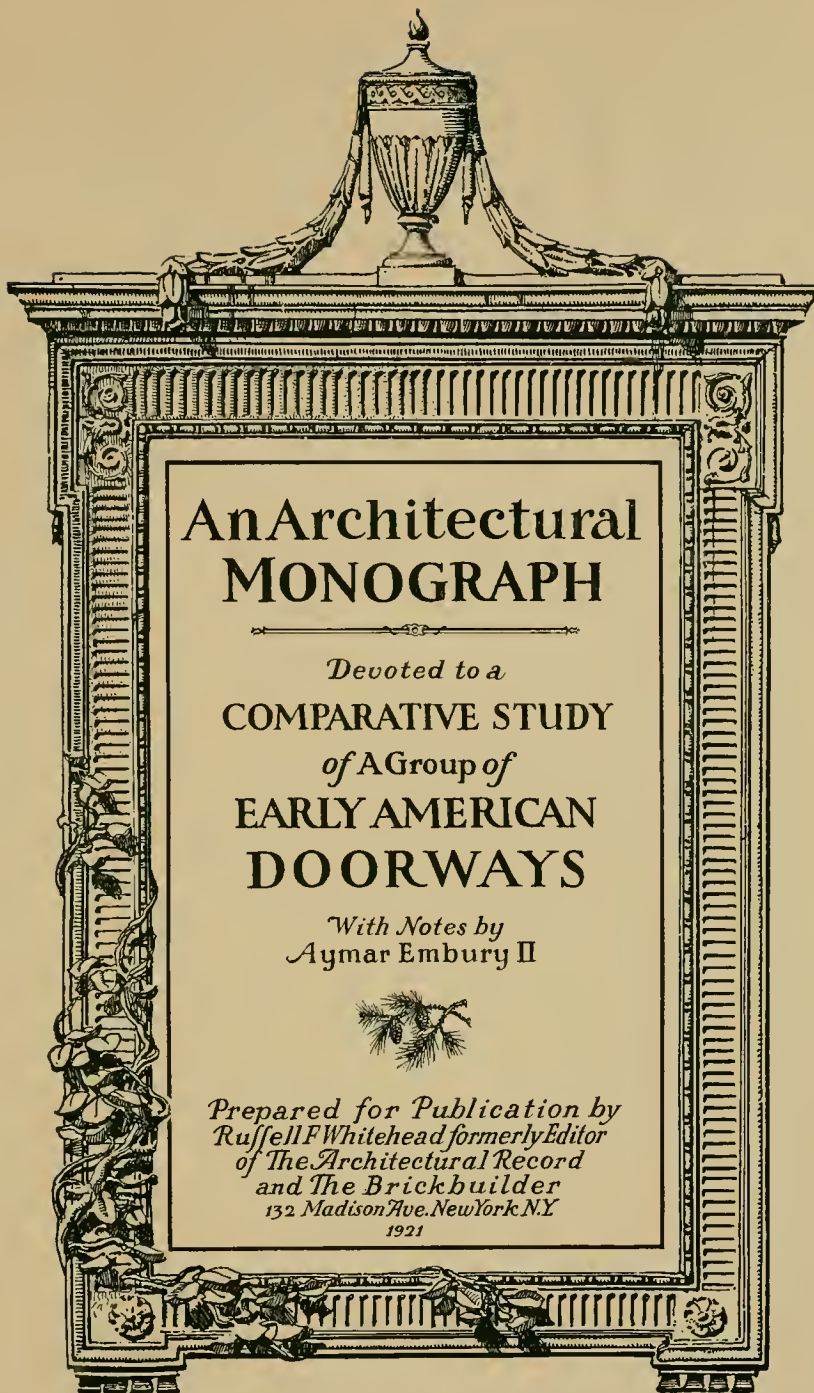
With Notes by
Aymar Embury II

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SAINT PAUL, MINNESOTA



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Vol. 7
No. 2
Fall



An Architectural MONOGRAPH

Devoted to a
COMPARATIVE STUDY
of A Group of
EARLY AMERICAN
DOORWAYS

With Notes by
Aymar Embury II



Prepared for Publication by
Russell F Whitehead formerly Editor
of The Architectural Record
and The Brickbuilder
132 Madison Ave. New York N.Y.
1921



HOUSE AT FARMINGTON, CONNECTICUT.

Doorway with circular pediment over square-headed opening. Built in 1690.

THE WHITE PINE SERIES OF ARCHITECTURAL MONOGRAPHS

A BI-MONTHLY PUBLICATION SUGGESTING THE
ARCHITECTURAL USES OF WHITE PINE AND ITS
AVAILABILITY TODAY AS A STRUCTURAL WOOD

Vol. VII

APRIL, 1921

No. 2

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF A GROUP OF EARLY AMERICAN DOORWAYS

PART ONE

By AYMAR EMBURY II

PHOTOGRAPHS BY KENNETH CLARK

BECAUSE of my interest in Colonial work, I have watched closely the progress of the *White Pine Series of Architectural Monographs* and have seen them grow into the best reference work on Colonial architecture (especially of New England) that I possess; and I have suggested to Mr. Whitehead from time to time that the value of the Series to the architect might be increased by the inclusion of comparative studies of the several details of Colonial work, in addition to the regional studies of complete houses. His answer has been to turn over to me the collection of photographs of entrances to Colonial houses, with a request that I make my own comparative study.

The subjects resolve themselves into two categories: those which are mere ornamental frontispieces, applied to the buildings, and those in which the more complex treatment of a doorway sheltered by a porch is used. The illustrations are so numerous, so interesting, and in many cases so unfamiliar, that we have thought it best to devote two issues of the Monograph Series to the subject, especially as the doorways of the older houses were usually the focal points of their treatment, and upon them the designer was apt to concentrate all his skill, and to execute them to the utmost of his ability. The average Colonial house was a simple boxlike mass, relieved by decorative treatment of the door and cornice. The proportion of the mass, and the shape, placing and division of the windows were the only other features over which the builder had control to influence his design. His limits were therefore as narrow as those of the designer of a Greek temple, and like the Greek architects, our designers were able to perfect their art by repetition and comparison, the differences be-

tween buildings being in general so slight that the introduction of a curved pediment over a doorway was a genuine triumph in originality, although square-headed and pedimented doors appear contemporaneously in the earliest Colonial work.

Since this Monograph is intended to be a comparative study, the illustrations have been grouped in eight classes, in accordance with the simplicity of their design rather than in order of age, or grouped according to locality. Of these divisions the simplest is obviously the square-headed opening without transom or side lights, and without especial elaboration in the treatment.

None of the illustrations happen to show an example of extraordinary antiquity (for this country), the earliest being the doorway of the Anna Halsey house, at Water Mill, Long Island, built about 1690, in which a common enough pilaster and entablature treatment has been varied by replacing the shaft of the pilaster by a cut out pattern resembling lattice, and applied to the outside casing of the door frame. This might have been done at any time in Colonial architecture, for the frontispiece was very clearly comprehended by Colonial architects to be a decorative motive and not a structural one (although derived from structural forms), and they were therefore willing and accustomed to take liberties with *applied* motives which they never (or rarely) took with genuine structural members: which is to my mind an indication of genuine understanding of architecture, in contradistinction to the late Italian architects, who were accustomed to ornament and distort structural members so that they appeared, and sometimes were, unstable. A more significant in-

dication of the age of the doorway is the fact that the entire entablature is broken around the projection of the pilasters, for it will be found in all seventeenth-century work that there exists a tendency to break horizontal courses around all projections (compare the Deerfield door, page eight, and the Marblehead door, page ten) in a manner which can only be explained as a survival of the

Gothic habit of breaking every label mold and belt course around every vertical member, no matter how insignificant, instead of letting them be received one by the other, or by butting them in part and returning them in part. That the Gothic influence did persist to some little extent in the Colonies is obvious to the student of early American architecture; the oldest extant building of English origin in the United States is unmistakably Gothic (St. Luke's Church at Smithfield, Va.), and characteristic Gothic moldings and even flamboyant tracery are found in even late work of the Dutch colonists on the Hudson River. The tendency to break all moldings around projections common to all seventeenth-century work persisted until the beginning of the nineteenth century among the Dutch, as in the case of the exquisite doorway of the Vreeland house in Englewood, N. J., illustrated on this page, although in all work of the English colonists it had long disappeared, or is found in sporadic cases only. The development of ornamental detail in England presents an entirely analogous case, the complicated character of the early Renaissance under Elizabeth and James I merging into the broad simple treatment of the Georgian art. A better exposition of the development of Colonial art cannot be made than



DOORWAY, CHASE HOUSE, ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND.
Built in 1769.

exactly how Colonial architecture began to merge into the first of our long series of modern renaissances. The examples are in themselves comparatively unimportant; what they show is necessary to be known by every architect who hopes to approximate the beauty of Colonial work.

That square-headed doorways were susceptible of considerable variation within narrow limits is sufficiently proved by the next three pages of three plates each. What has before been said applies equally to them, from the quaint door of the Webb house at East Marion, L. I., to the door of the Bishop Porter house; this latter I regard as being as nearly perfect as architecture can be, the fine flower of two centuries of effort in a single style. Simple in the extreme, it resembles the English work of the Adam style with less ornament, but in proportion in scale and in detail it cannot be surpassed.

Of the pedimented doorways it is necessary to say but little. The cushion frieze was a marked feature of all early work, usually appearing before 1750 and rarely after that date. The Griswold house is a late example if the date is correct; but dates on most Colonial work must be regarded as approximations, for unless well authenticated records appear the present owners rely on tradition and frequently confuse dates of original construction



DOORWAY, VREELAND HOUSE, ENGLEWOOD, N. J.



House in Norwichtown, Connecticut.
1802.



House near Westbrook, Connecticut.
1795.



Anna Halsey House, Water Mill, Long Island.
1690.

DOORWAYS—GROUP "A"—SQUARE-HEADED OPENING WITHOUT TRANSOM OR SIDE LIGHTS.



Stephen Bockers House, Norwich, Connecticut.
1700.



Webb House, East Marion, Long Island.
1702.



House at Wells, Maine.
Circa 1815.

DOORWAYS—GROUP "B"—SQUARE-HEADED OPENING WITH RECTANGULAR TRANSOM.



Bishop Porter House, Deerfield, Massachusetts.
1803.

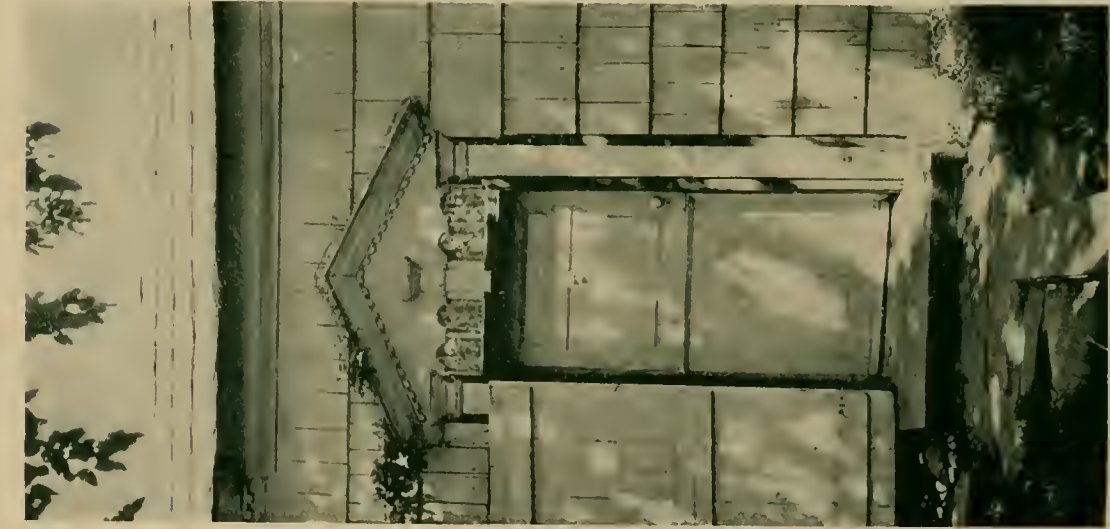


Farm House at Milton, Massachusetts.
1795.



House at Wells, Maine.
Circa 1815.

DOORWAYS—GROUP "C"—SQUARE-HEADED OPENING WITH CIRCULAR TRANSOM.



Miller House, Millers Place, Long Island.
1700.

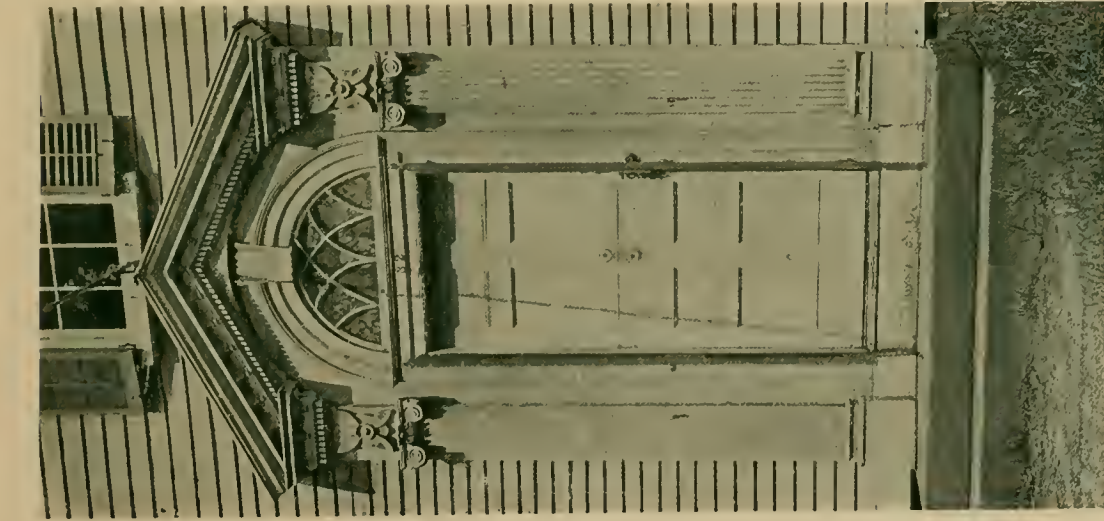


House at Deerfield, Massachusetts.
Seventeenth century.



Griswold House, Guilford, Connecticut.
Circa 1780.

DOORWAYS—GROUP "D"—PEDIMENTED WITH SQUARE-HEADED OPENING.



House at Apponaug, Rhode Island.
Circa 1800.

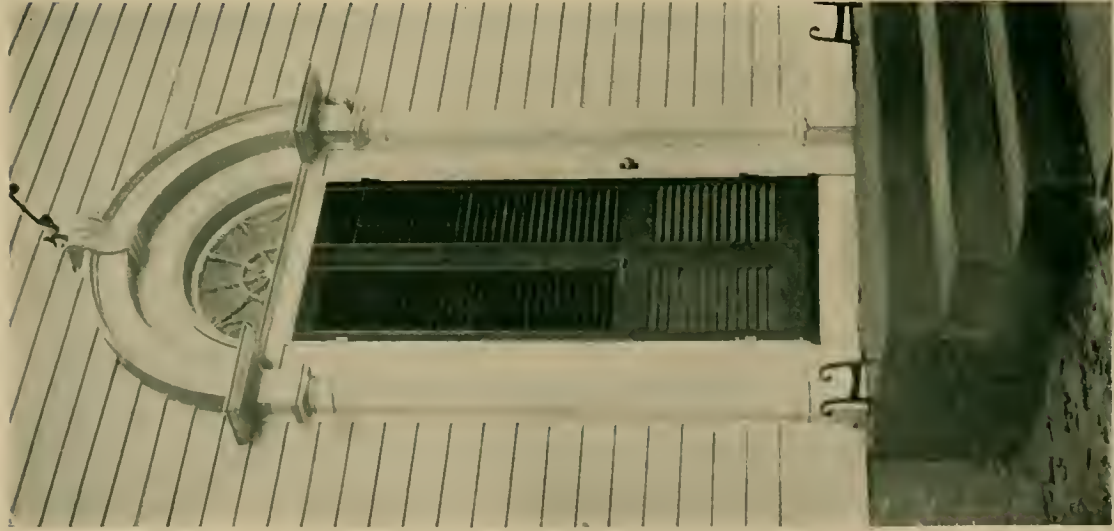


Stone House, Worthington, Massachusetts.
1803.



Colonel Smith House, Stonington, Connecticut.
1800.

DOORWAYS—GROUP "E"—PEDIMENTED WITH CIRCULAR HEADED OPENING.



House at Bristol, Rhode Island,
1810.

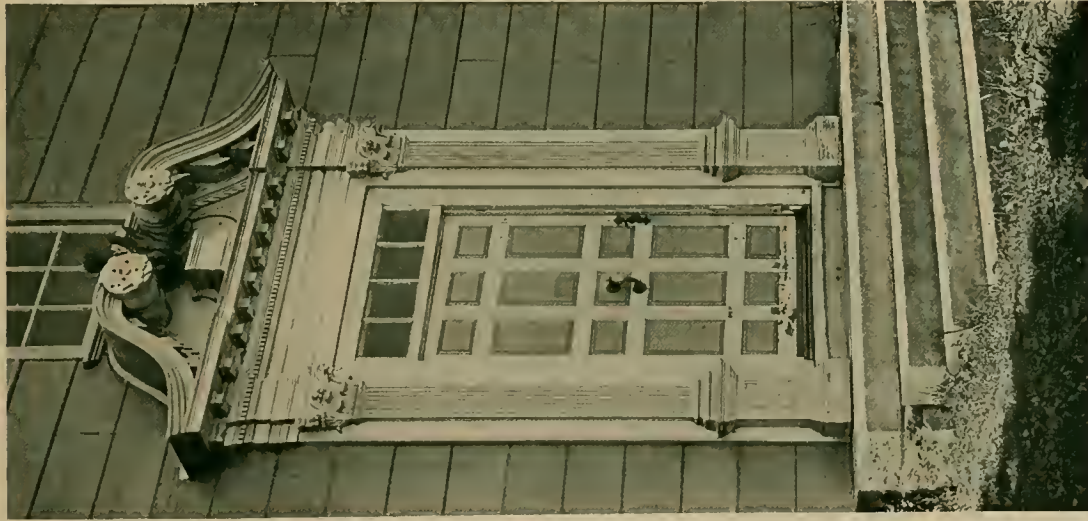


The Doak House, Marblehead, Massachusetts,
1705.



House at Marblehead, Massachusetts,
Circa 1700.

DOORWAYS—GROUP "F"—CIRCULAR PEDIMENT WITH SQUARE-HEADED OPENING.



Wentworth-Gardner House, Portsmouth, N. H.
1760.

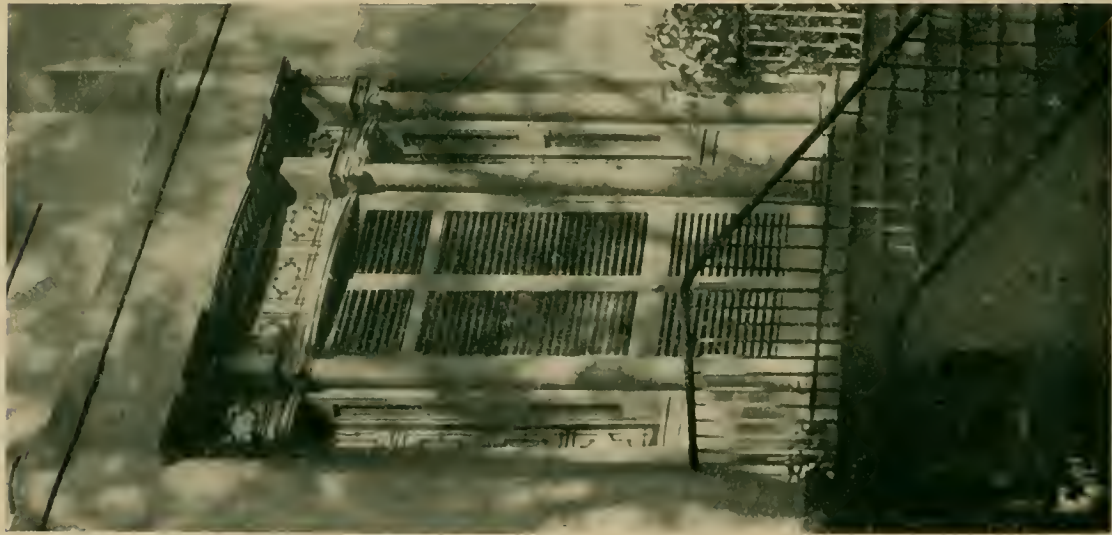


House at Saco, Maine.
1790.



House at Norwichtown, Connecticut.
Circa 1760.

DOORWAYS—GROUP "G"—BROKEN PEDIMENT WITH SQUARE-HEADED OPENING.



House at Fredericksburg, Virginia.
Circa 1804.



House at East Windsor Hill, Connecticut.
Circa 1800.



House near Aurora, New York.
1830.

DOORWAYS—GROUP "H"—COMBINATION OF DOOR AND SIDE LIGHTS. Three Types.

and rebuilding, so that one can never be perfectly sure about any feature of a Colonial house unless it appears in some contemporary picture; and often assigned dates are obviously incorrect. However, in this Monograph, care has been taken to distinguish those dates which are reasonably certain from those which are doubtful. Thus a circular headed opening within an order is a late development, and when appearing (as it some-

The combination of door and side lights, or door side lights and transom, is again of late development, probably not occurring commonly in New England before 1760 or 1770, although in Maryland excellent examples of far earlier date occur.

To sum up: the earliest doorways now known were undecorated in any way; the first decorated doorways are comparable in design to English



DETAIL OF DOORWAY. HOUSE AT APPONAUG, RHODE ISLAND.
Built circa 1800.

times does) on an old house must be regarded as an alteration, and not as dating from the original house, and while circular pediments undoubtedly occurred in every early work they were over square-headed openings. The broken pediment (of which three interesting examples are shown) was also of late date, that in Norwichtown, Connecticut, being perhaps the most interesting illustration in the Monograph, because of the curious series of breaks which are introduced into the moldings, both horizontal and rake, for no reason except their supposed decorative effect.

Jacobean, showing traces of Gothic influence in their transitional style; succeeding them came a great mass of work which was fairly close to book classic proportions, with detail copied, as nearly as the limitations of the workmen allowed, from Roman precedent; next the extremely attenuated architecture comparable to English Adam, although I think it to have been a parallel development and not a derivative; and last a mixture of this style with Greek moldings and detail. This is of course true of all Colonial work, but nowhere can its development be so clearly traced as in the doorways.



HOUSE AT STONINGTON, CONNECTICUT.

Pedimented doorway with square-headed opening.

SIXTH ANNUAL ARCHITECTURAL COMPETITION

PROGRAMME FOR A THREE TEACHER RURAL SCHOOL WITH TEACHERS' COTTAGE OUTSIDE FINISH TO BE OF WHITE PINE

PRIZES AND MENTIONS

Design placed first will receive	-	\$750.00
Design placed second will receive	-	400.00
Design placed third will receive	-	250.00
Design placed fourth will receive	-	100.00

SIX MENTIONS

JURY OF AWARD

James O. Betelle	-	-	Newark
Wm. B. Ittner	-	-	Saint Louis
Guy Lowell	-	-	New York and Boston
Arthur I. Meigs	-	-	Philadelphia
Irving K. Pond	-	-	Chicago

Architects and Architectural Draughtsmen are cordially invited to compete

Competition closes at 5 p.m., Monday, May 2, 1921

Judgment, May 13 and 14, 1921

IN the center of a small but progressive community it is desired to erect a model school building to take care of the children in the elementary grades in the village and a number of children from the surrounding districts who will be transported to this school in the village by the means of motor buses over fine concrete roads.

It should be realized that education in the rural sections of our country has never before received the intelligent attention that is now being given it. The amount of illiteracy discovered among the drafted men during the war has spurred the Government and the various States into active educational campaigns. The typical rural school as it now exists, both from an architectural and a scholastic standpoint, is very lamentable and unattractive. We are concerned, however, only with its architectural aspect.

The progressive community in which this school is to be erected wants something more than merely four walls and a roof enclosing just sufficient class rooms for the number of pupils to be accommodated. They desire a building expressive of the purpose for which it is to be used, and one which will set a high standard of good taste and architectural beauty for the community. They desire to see abandoned several of the old one-room schools adjacent to the town and to build a model school building in the village which will consolidate a few of the schools in the outlying districts.

Rural school buildings in a village such as the one we are dealing with are no longer used but a few months in the year to teach the three R's. They are used as community centers throughout the entire year, and interest is created in the school and the education of the children by providing something of educational and social interest for the adults, and in this way making the parents feel that the school really belongs to them. This is done by providing facilities in connection with the school building for activities outside of strictly school work, such as a meeting place for the Parents' and Teachers' Association, for the local Grange, and the use of the building for entertainments, dances, and moving pictures. Modern movable desks are used for the pupils, so the center of the floor can be cleared when desired. Folding partitions are installed between class rooms so that the enlarged area

is available for the community activities. Besides the standard Class Rooms, the school should include a small Library, where current magazines are kept on file and from time to time packages of books are received from the central library in the adjoining city, which are loaned to the school children and their parents.

A child in the country needs to be taught many practical things besides his book studies, therefore a room is provided for the boys in which there is a work bench, a grind-stone, a cobbler's bench, a cabinet for tools, a long table for agricultural work, etc. A similar room for the girls, which contains a cook stove, a work table, laundry trays, dining-room table, sewing machine, etc. Since the ordinary teacher cannot handle all these special subjects, it is contemplated having a special teacher for the boys and a special teacher for the girls, who will have several schools in charge and visit each one possibly one day a week. These special rooms are also useful to the adults as demonstration places in modern agricultural methods and farm management for the men, and canning and cooking demonstrations for the women. Also as a place to prepare refreshments for entertainments and meetings and serving hot lunches to the pupils.

There should be play rooms which in rainy and winter weather the children could use during recess periods and before and after school.

It is desired to lay out the grounds with paths, shrubs, and trees in an attractive way so that it will be the pride of the community. A portion of the site is to be equipped with play-ground apparatus and space assigned for various games for use of the children and adults both during and outside of school hours. Part of the ground will also be devoted to a demonstration garden for the use of the pupils in connection with their studies in agriculture.

In order to obtain and keep well-trained teachers of a quality equal to the high standard set by the school building, it is necessary to provide some suitable living quarters for them. A highly educated teacher is not willing to make her home in the country hotel or usual boarding house, which may be quite a distance from the school and in other ways objectionable. To make the school plant complete in every respect a teachers' cottage will be built on the school property.

THE PROBLEM

A. The design of a three-room rural school building to be built of wood—all outside finish, consisting of siding and corner boards; window sash, frames and casings; outside doors, door frames and casings, outside blinds; all exposed porch and balcony lumber; cornice

boards, brackets, ornaments and mouldings, etc., not including shingles, to be of White Pine. The school property is level and contains about five acres. It is located on the east side of the main street of the village, which runs north and south, and between two minor

roads, making a frontage of the property of three hundred feet on the main street and a depth of seven hundred feet to a property line. The building is to be kept well back from the main street and the front portion of the property developed and used as a small Park or Village Green. The requirements are as follows:

Building to be one story with or without a basement, or with basement partially excavated for boiler and fuel rooms.

Three standard class rooms, each with an area of 720 square feet, and seating 40 pupils each. Two of these rooms separated by folding partitions.

Ceiling heights not less than 12' 0" in clear.

Class rooms lighted from left side only. Windows in one long bank. Heads of windows as close to ceiling as possible. Net glass area of windows to equal not less than 20% of the class room floor area.

Adjoining each class room shall be provided a coat room for the pupils' clothing.

An industrial art room shall be provided for boys, equal in area from $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a class room. Net glass area to be same proportion as called for in class room, but windows may be on one or two sides of the room.

A domestic science room for girls, equal in area from $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ of a class room. Net glass area to be same proportion as called for in class room, but windows may be on one or two sides of room.

A room for library, 150 to 200 square feet.

A teachers' room with toilet accommodations and about the same size as library.

Toilet room for boys, containing two W. C.'s and three urinals and two lavatories.

Toilet rooms for girls, containing four W. C.'s and two lavatories.

A play room for boys equal to about a class room in area.

A play room for girls, equal to about a class room in area.

These play rooms may be either in the basement or on main floor. In any case, they must be adjacent to and the toilet rooms made available, as these play rooms are used before and after school and in summer time when the main portion of school is closed. Toilet rooms should also be easily accessible from main part of school building. Play rooms must be directly accessible from outside of building and also accessible to main portions of building from the inside.

Two or more entrances must be provided.

A flag-pole, higher than the school building, must be located on the property in a dignified position.

The building will be heated and ventilated by a hot-air furnace or steam boiler. Therefore, a furnace room and a fuel room are necessary, also a small general storage room, janitor's room, etc.

Electricity, water and sewerage facilities are supplied by the village. For this reason the school will not have the usual outside drinking pumps, toilets, etc., but will have modern city conveniences.

The architectural style is optional.

B. The design of a teachers' cottage—construction materials similar to those of school building. The requirements are as follows:

Living room with fireplace, area 225 square feet.

Dining room, area about 150 square feet.

Kitchen and accessories, area about 130 square feet.

Three teacher's bedrooms with clothes closets, area about 125 square feet each.

Bath room; closet for trunks; and a porch.

The teachers' cottage may be one story or two stories in height, at the option of the designer. It should have a domestic character, but correspond in general architectural style to the school building.

IT IS REQUIRED TO SHOW: A pen and ink perspective of school building, projected from $\frac{1}{8}$ inch scale plan, clearly indicating the character of exterior

finish. If teachers' cottage comes within the picture, it should be shown. A pen and ink bird's-eye perspective showing the entire property and including school building, teachers' cottage, layout of grounds, such as paths, drives, planting, vegetable garden, playground equipment, etc., projected from $\frac{1}{32}$ inch scale plot plan. If all the rooms called for in school building are on one floor, only one floor plan is needed. If building has both basement and first floor, two plans will be needed, at $\frac{1}{16}$ inch scale. Front and side elevation of school building, at $\frac{1}{16}$ inch scale. Plan of each floor of Teachers' Cottage if more than one floor is contemplated at $\frac{1}{8}$ inch scale. One elevation of teachers' cottage, at $\frac{1}{8}$ inch scale. Detail drawings at $\frac{3}{4}$ inch scale of main entrance feature of school and other details either of School, Cottage or Village Green embellishments to present the subject attractively.

JUDGMENT: The Jury of Award will consider the architectural merit of the design and the ingenuity shown in the development of the plans; the fitness of the design to express a wood-built building; the appropriateness of the design to the given site.

Excellence of rendering of the perspective, while desirable, will not have undue weight with the Jury, in comparison with their estimate of the contestant's ability if otherwise shown.

The Jury positively will not consider designs which do not conform in all respects to the conditions of the Competition.

PRESENTATION: Drawings are to be shown on two sheets only. Each sheet is to be exactly $26 \times 34\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Plain border lines are to be drawn so that the space inside them will be exactly $25 \times 33\frac{1}{2}$ inches. Whatman or similar white paper is to be used. Bristol board or thin paper is prohibited, and no drawings are to be presented mounted. All drawings must be made in BLACK ink. *Diluted black ink is particularly prohibited.* Color or wash on the drawings will not be permitted. There is to be printed on the drawings as space may permit: "DESIGN FOR A WHITE PINE THREE TEACHER RURAL SCHOOL." The drawings are to be signed by a *nom de plume* or device.

DELIVERY OF DRAWINGS: The drawings are to be rolled in a strong tube, not less than 3 inches in diameter, or enclosed between stiff corrugated boards, and sent to RUSSELL F. WHITEHEAD, EDITOR, 132 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK, N. Y., to reach him on or before Monday, May 2, 1921. Enclosed with the drawings is to be a sealed envelope, bearing on the outside the chosen *nom de plume*, and on the inside the true name and address of the contestant. Drawings sent by mail must be at the first-class postage rate.

Drawings submitted in this Competition are at owner's risk from the time they are sent until returned, although reasonable care will be exercised in their handling and keeping.

THE PRIZE DESIGNS are to become the property of *The White Pine Series of Architectural Monographs*, and the right is reserved by this publication to publish or exhibit any or all of the other drawings.

PUBLICATION OF DESIGNS: The Prize and Mention drawings will be published in the August, 1921, number of the Monograph Series; a copy of this issue will be sent to each competitor.

Where drawings are published or exhibited, the contestant's full name and address will be given and all inquiries regarding his work will be forwarded to him.

RETURN OF DRAWINGS: The authors of non-premiated designs will have their drawings returned, postage prepaid, direct from the Editor's office.

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